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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/714,774	11/16/2000	William S. Kerker	9974/55	5231

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GENERAL NUMBER 00757  
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EXAMINER

BARTUSKA, FRANCIS JOHN

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3627

DATE MAILED: 04/21/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

## Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/714,774

Applicant(s)

KERKER ET AL.

Examiner

F. J. BARTUSKA

Art Unit

3627



-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 02 April 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-126 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-126 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)   | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                                   | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)             |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

## DETAILED ACTION

### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101*

35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

Claims 1-50 and 102-126 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter.

The basis of this rejection is set forth in a two-prong test of:

- (1) whether the invention is within the technological arts; and
- (2) whether the invention produces a useful, concrete, and tangible result.

For a claimed invention to be statutory, the claimed invention must be within the technological arts. Mere ideas in the abstract (i.e., abstract idea, law of nature, natural phenomena) that do not apply, involve, use, or advance the technological arts fail to promote the “progress of science and the useful arts” (i.e., the physical sciences as opposed to social sciences, for example) and therefore are found to be non-statutory subject matter. For a process, the recited process must somehow apply, involve, use or advance the technological arts.

In the present case, claims 1-50 and 102-126 only recite an abstract idea. The recited steps of receiving a first request for a first suggested order and generating a first profile do not apply, involve, use or advance the technological arts since all of the recited steps can be performed in the mind of the user or by use of paper and pencil. These steps only constitute an idea of how an order for products is received and a profile for recurrence of the order is generated.

As to technological arts recited in the preamble, mere recitation in the preamble (i.e., intended or field of use) or mere implication of employing a machine or article of manufacture to perform some or all of the recited steps does not confer statutory subject matter to an otherwise abstract idea unless there is positive recitation in the claim as a whole to breathe life and meaning into the preamble. In the present case, none of the recited steps are directed to anything in the technological arts as explained above with the exception of the recitation in the preamble that the method is for facilitating electronic commerce through a network that comprises at least one server capable of communicating with a remote client computer. Looking at the claim

as a whole, nothing in the body of the claim recites any structure or functionality to suggest that the network and computing devices perform the recited steps. Therefore, the preamble is taken to merely recite a field of use.

Additionally, for a claim invention to be statutory, the claimed invention must produce a useful, concrete and tangible result.

In the present case, the claimed invention is repeatable and therefore it is concrete and it is used in generating a recurrence profile and therefore it is useful and tangible.

Although the recited process produces a useful, concrete and tangible result, since the claimed invention, as a whole, is not within the technological arts as explained above, claims 1-50 and 102-126 are deemed to be directed to non-statutory subject matter.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

The changes made to 35 U.S.C. 102(e) by the American Inventors Protection Act of 1999 (AIPA) do not apply to the examination of this application as the application being examined was not (1) filed on or after November 29, 2000, or (2) voluntarily published under 35 U.S.C. 122(b). Therefore, this application is examined under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) prior to the amendment by the AIPA (pre-AIPA 35 U.S.C. 102(e)).

Claims 1-20, 24-70, 74-114 and 116-126 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being clearly anticipated by Slotznick. Slotznick discloses a method for facilitating electronic commerce that presents products to be purchased and inquires if the purchases are to be a recurring event; and if they are, schedules the next occurrence, see col. 20, lines 26-29 and col. 21, lines 35-40. Col. 10, lines 13-17 of Slotznick discloses that at the first of the month an order is transmitted and the items ordered in any particular month are based upon a combination of inventory sensing equipment and computer based sales projections.

Therefore, a profile is generated that results in different items being ordered month to month.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Claims 21-23, 71-73 and 115 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Slotznick in view of Japanese publication 5-250392. Slotznick discloses all the features of the applicants' claimed invention except basing the recurrence of the purchase on the lifespan of the products. Japanese publication 5-250392 discloses a method of automatically repeating an order after a time period. The time period is determined based upon the demand movement of the article to insure that there is always a sufficient amount of the article at the use location. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art in view of the showing and teaching of Japanese publication 5-250392 to modify the time period of the recurring purchase order of Slotznick to be based upon the demand use of the products, to insure that there is always a sufficient quantity of the products.

### ***Response to Arguments***

The applicant's remarks have been considered but have not been found persuasive because the disclosure in col. 10, lines 13-17 of Slotznick clearly discloses a situation where the inventory sensing equipment or the computer based sales projections generates a



recurrence of item ordering in which different items are ordered from one month to the next.

### ***Conclusion***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to F. J. BARTUSKA whose telephone number is 703-308-1111. The examiner can normally be reached on MONDAY-FRIDAY (ALTERNATE FRIDAYS OFF).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, ROBERT P. OLSZEWSKI can be reached on 703-308-5183. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

fjb

F. J. BARTUSKA  
PRIMARY EXAMINER